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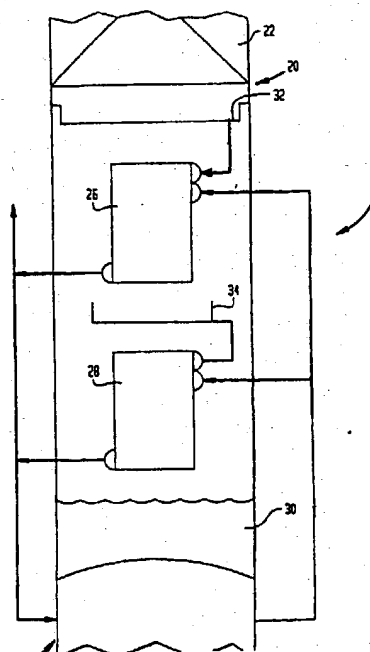
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(54) Method of operating the lower pressure column of a double distillation column

(57) An ascending vapour phase is initiated within the lower pressure column 20 of a double distillation column 1 by vaporising a descending liquid phase at a column location situated between mass transfer elements 22 and a sump region 30 of the lower pressure column 20. The liquid phase is vaporised within two or more down flow reboilers 26 and 28 fed with the liquid phase so that the unboiled liquid from one (26) of the down flow reboilers is fed to the other (28) of the down flow reboilers, thereby to cause vaporisation to be distributed between the down flow reboilers 26 and 28. The down flow reboilers 26 and 28 are operated such that sufficient vaporisation occurs to produce a predetermined liquid-vapour ratio at the column location between the transfer elements 22 and the sump 30 without the requirement of recirculating sump liquid to prevent dry out.

FIG.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 10 August 1999	Examiner Lapeyrere, J
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			

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